Edgar Allan Poe's Mother-in-Law

BY PHILIP ALEXANDER BRUCE

THE two women to whom, from a practical point of view, Edgar Allan Poe was most indebted were the first Mrs. Allan, his foster-mother, and Mrs. Clemm, the mother of his wife. It is well known how warm was the affection which Mrs. Allan felt for him; how after the quarrel between him and her husband, which led to a permanent estrangement, she still kept his room always ready for his reoccupation; how she never ceased to urge the stubborn and obdurate Mr. Allan to be reconciled to him, and how, in the same spirit, she evinced on all occasions her maternal solicitude for his welfare. Poe never failed to respond to this devotion. Even during his final exile from home, when the breach between his foster-father and himself had become really irreparable, he kept up a steady correspondence with his foster-mother, and there is reason to think that it was a cause of the sharpest grief to him that he arrived in Richmond from Fortress Monroe too late to see her before she breathed her last.

How vividly and tenderly she lingered in his memory is proven by a little incident that occurred in 1849, a few weeks before his own death, and many years after Mrs. Allan herself had passed away. "I was fond of orris root," writes Miss Ingram, "and always had the odor of it about my clothes. One day, when we were walking together, he spoke of it. 'I like it, too,' he said. 'Do you know what it makes me think of? My adopted mother. Whenever the bureau drawers in her room were opened there came from them a whiff of orris r t, and ever since, when I smell it, go back to the time when I was a little boy, and it brings back thoughts of my mother.'"

It is a convincing proof of the essential amiability of Poe's temper, of his native capacity for steady affection and gratitude also, that he won the unwavering devotion of the two women with whom, if we except his wife, he was longest and most intimately associated.

A Wonderful Friendship.

Mrs. Clemm clung to him with a tenderness and fidelity that must be explained by some other influence beside her poverty or her loneliness. Did ever a woman have a more precarious support always, and at times more completely impotent provider? Did ever another woman of equal intelligence and refinement follow a man, neither her husband nor her son nor her lover, through 'such a bottomless fen of indigence, through such an interminable vale of anguish and sorrow? The history of literature does not offer a more pitiful example of self-sacrifice than she presented from the beginning to the end of her intercourse with Poe, and the reason for her action is to be found in her own words: "He was," she wrote after his death, "more than a son to me in his long-continued and affectionate observance of every duty to me." In her turn she can be extolled as having been more than a mother to him in her love, her constancy, her patience, her forbearance and her watchfulness. For his sake she shrank from no tasks, however humble, and for his sake she was ready to endure without a murmur even the hardships which his own weaknesses had precipitated upon her.

Brought up with no prospect of even a competency, Mrs. Clemm was left a penniless widow, with children, without kin either able or willing to assist her, owing to family dissensions. Poverty was not the only misfortune of her early lot. For eight years her mother was a hopeless paralytic, confined to her bed, her only attendant during this protracted and wearisome illness being her daughter, who, in the words of her famous son-in-law, evinced in that mother's behalf during this anxious period "a Christian and martyr-like fortitude and a constancy of attention and an unremitting affection which must exalt her character in the eyes of all who knew her."

Mrs. Clemm was schooled in adversity and disciplined by sorrow at an age when most women are filled with the careless joy of mere existence. When she became first associated with the poet she already possessed those qualities which, from a moral point of view at least, were to carry her so nobly through all the exasperating and harrowing scenes to which she was to be exposed by the concurrence of their lives. When Poe was dismissed from West Point he seems to have at once realized that the only home he could turn to was his aunt's, in Baltimore, although, of all his kin in that city, he knew that she was the one in the most indigent circumstances—to such a degree indeed that she was compelled to earn a precarious livelihood as a seamstress and dressmaker. Affectionate and sympathetic though she was, she would not have been able to afford him a permanent asylum under her roof had he not been in the enjoyment of a small annuity from Mr. Allan, which enabled him to meet his own expenses. But her home, plain and bare as it was, was as open to him now as it had been when he withdrew from the ranks of the regular army at Fortress Monroe.

Mrs. Clemm Censured.

Mrs. Weiss asserts that Mrs. Clemm was very much censured after the public marriage in Richmond for having consented to her daughter's union with a man so much older than herself and so much inclined even then to dissipation. At this time Virginia was only fourteen years of age, and looked even younger in face and figure.

Judging by appearances alone, the criticism of the mother does not seem unjust. Mrs. Clemm's true reasons for approving the match were probably mixed. In the first place, she might have honestly thought that Virginia's happiness, young as she was, would be certainly promoted by it, if any inference was to be drawn from the despondency she had shown when her cousin removed to Richmond to take part in the editorial management of the Messenger. It was the more easy to arrive at this conclusion when Poe himself was urging an early marriage, and exhibiting every sign of depression at the prospect of even a temporary separation. With the two persons directly concerned so full of eagerness, was it unnatural that Mrs. Clemm, who had so few family ties to solace her, and no arm whatever to lean upon, should have yielded, even though she herself may have looked upon Virginia as being too young to contemplate wedlock, and upon Edgar as still to be tested as a provider? As to his personal merits, it should be borne in mind that, during the whole of his sojourn in Baltimore, under the same roof as her daughter and herself, he had been strictly abstemious and temperate. If she had heard of his previous dissipation, was it extravagant in her to presume that marriage, and the responsibilities of family life, would bring to bear a powerful influence to prevent its recurrence? She herself has left a statement of her reasons for favoring the union: "In Richmond, myself and daughter know that we have some one to love and care for us. There (in Baltimore) we had no one. Edgar is indeed a son to me, and has always been so. He will, I am sure, do all in his power to make us happy."

From this time, Mrs. Clemm's life becomes completely identified with the poet's. Wherever the husband and wife might be residing, there she was to be found, with an arm, as it were, around each of her two children, their genial companion in their brightest hours, their sympathetic companion in their darkest. Dr. Griswold, who was never very friendly to her, declares that whatever ease in his circumstances Poe may have enjoyed, he was chiefly indebted for it to his mother-in-law, "who loved him with more than maternal devotion and constancy."

An Eventful Sojourn.

During the eventful sojourn in the little cottage at Spring Hill, Philadelphia, Mrs. Clemm seems to have performed all the mental offices, was cook, laundress, and cleaner in turn; and in these differtnt characters exhibited all the efficiency of practical experience. But, in addition, she was a skilful cloak and dressmaker, by which employment, in her hours of leisure, she was able to increase the family's slender income. At Fordham, besides attending to all the recurring work of the kitchen and laundry, and devoting many hours to sewing, she knitted pretty fancy pieces and small knick-knacks, which she sold at the neighboring store, Mrs. Grove-Nicholls, who had watched her from day to day in the performances of this homely round of duties, spoke of her as being a sort of universal providence to her "strange children." That these "strange children" felt her absence keenly, although the separation may have been only for a few days, is revealed in a letter by Poe which has been preserved. Mrs. Clemm was still in Philadelphia, while the poet and his wife were domiciled in New York, whither they had gone in advance to choose a boarding house. "You can't imagine how much we both do miss you," he declared with simple directness and palpable sincerity. "Sissy had a hearty cry last night because you and Caterina (the cat) weren't here. * * * The very instant I scrape together enough money I will send it on."

Mrs. Clemm's devotion to her son-in-law was not manifested simply in caring for his home and in assisting with her own industrious and skilful hands in securing the precarious means to maintain and hold it; perhaps the most important as well as the most pathetic duty which she performed, after the removal to New York, when Poe, for the time being, had lost all editorial connection with magazines, was to visit almost daily the offices to dispose of the articles which he had been able to write in the intervals between serious illnesses. She was now about sixty years of age, tall in person, dignified in carriage, and with a manner most refined and self-possessed. She wore a widow's cap, which harmonized very thoroughly with her snow-white hair and her black dress. One who had seen her recalled in after years "her stalwart and queenly air." The impression which she made in New York as the poet's literary agent is thus vividly described by Willis:

"Our first knowledge of Mr. Poe's removal to this city was by a call which we received from a lady who introduced herself to us as the mother of his wife. She was in search of employment for him, and she excused her errand by mentioning that he was ill; that her daughter was a confirmed invalid; and that their circumstances were such as compelled her taking it upon herself. The countenance of this lady, made beautiful and saintly with an evident complete giving up of her life to privation, and sorrowful tenderness; her gentle and mournful voice urging its plea; her long-forgotten, but habitually and unconsciously refined manners; and her appealing and yet appreciative mention of the claims and abilities of her son, disclosed at once the presence of one of those angels upon earth that women in adversity can be. It was a hard fate that she was watching over. Mr. Poe wrote with fastidious difficulty, and in a style too much above the popular line to be well paid. He was always in pecuniary difficulty, and with his sick wife frequently in want of the merest necessities of life. Winter after winter for years, the most touching sight to us in this whole city has been that tireless minister to genius, thinly and insufficiently clad, going from office to office with a poem, or an article on some literary subject, to sell; sometimes simply pleading in a broken voice that he was ill and begging for time; mentioning nothing but that he was ill, whatever might be the reason for his writing nothing; and never, amid all her tears and recitals of distress, suffering one syllable to escape her lips that could convey a doubt of him, or a complaint, or a lessening of pride in his genius or his good intentions. Her daughter died a year and a half since, but she did not desert him. She continued his ministering angel, living with him, caring for him, guarding him against exposure; and when he was carried away by temptation, amid grief and loneliness of feelings unreplied to, and from his self-abandonment, prostrated in destitution and suffering, begged for him still."

Her Devotion All-Absorbing.

These generous and eloquent words, which reflect honor upon Willis's kindness of heart and sense of humanity, give a vivid impression of Mrs. Clemm's unselfish and all-absorbing devotion to her son-in-law. It is no exaggeration to say that this devotion only became more exclusive and more self-sacrificing after her daughter's death. "Edgar never liked to be alone," she informs us, "and I used to sit up with him often until 4 o'clock in the morning, he at his desk writing, and I dozing in my chair. When he was composing 'Eureka,' ye used to walk up and down the garden, his arm around me, mine around him, until I was so tired I could not walk.... I always sat up with him when he was writing, and gave him a cup of hot coffee every hour or two. At home, he was simple and affectionate as a child, and, during all the years he lived with me, I do not remember a single night he failed to come and kiss his 'mother,' as he called me, before going to bed."

It would be difficult to picture too strongly the loneliness of Poe's unfortunate mother-in-law during his absences from home following the death of Virginia. After that tragic event, she had more reason than before to expect that he would, in the numerous temptations that would beset him while traveling, fall again into a course of dissipation, which might at any time, terminate fatally through excess or exposure. Or even should he continue perfectly sober, he might, by succeeding in his purpose of remarrying, introduce into the simple cottage at Fordham some one who, because unaccustomed to that plain and bare life, would in her discontent sow seeds of permanent alienation in the little household.

In a letter written to Mrs. Richmond, a Lowell friend, in November, 1848, just after the poet's return from Providence (where, in the appalling agitation of his courtship of the wavering Mrs. Whitman, he seems to have lost all semblance of self-control for a time), Mrs. Clemm unconsciously disclosed the poignancy of the anxiety which had been torturing her: "God has heard my prayers," she says, "and once more returned my poor, darling Eddie to me. But how changed. I scarcely knew him! I was nearly distracted at not hearing from him. I knew something dreadful had occurred. And, oh! how near I was to losing him! But our good and gracious God saved him. The blood about my heart becomes cold when I think of it."

Mrs. Clemm Jubilant.

In the following month, when the poet's precarious betrothal to Mrs. Whitman had been finally ruptured, Mrs. Clemm gave a free and jubilant expression to her satisfaction. "I feel so happy in all my troubles," she write to the same correspondent. "Eddie is not going to marry Mrs. Whitman." And later she writes: "Eddie has been at home three weeks, and has not written her once; and he is writing most industriously." Only a few months had passed when the poet, acutely disappointed in his hope of obtaining profitable literary engagements, became ill. "I thought," said Mrs. Clemm, "he would die several times. God knows I wish we were both in our graves. It would, I am sure, be far better." The burden of caree and anxiety had been too oppressive for the sorely tried and long-enduring woman to bear further without a sign of distress; and a cry of despair, unusual on her brave lips, had been wrenched at is were from the depths of her heart.

But the acrid contents of her cup were not yet all swallowed. In June the poet decided to visit Richmond on a lecturing tour to procure funds with which to issue the first number of his projected magazine. Mrs. Clemm at this time was stopping with friends residing in Brooklyn. Poe had during the course of many weeks been deeply despondent. "My sadness," he had written, "is unaccountable . . . I am full of dark forebodings. Nothing cheers or comforts me. My life seems wasted—the future looks a dreary blank." It was in this strangely prescient mood that he parted with his devoted mother-in-law for the last time; but he sought to hide his melancholy anticipations by words of hopefulness. "God bless you," he said to her as they took final leave of each other. "God bless you, my own darling Muddie. Do not fear for Eddie. See how good I will be while I am away, and I'll come back to love and comfort you."

Mrs. Clemm had accompanied him to the pier, where he was to embark for Philadelphia, and she silently stood and gazed fixedly in the direction of the receding boat as long as she could distinguish the poet's form on deck, now to be forever withdrawn from her deeply anxious view. That he himself thought that this might be their last farewell was revealed in the emphasis with which he provided, through her, for certain wishes of his being carried out in case of his death.

Apprehended Misfortune.

The unhappy woman was now left in that state of tremulous uncertainty into which she was always thrown in his absences, however short they were intended to be. She must now have apprehended misfortune to him, even more acutely than was usual with her, for on this occasion he had been gone but one day when she called on a wealthy friend who had offered to assist her in an emergency. This friend at once expressed her cheerful willingness to fulfil her promise, provided that Mrs. Clemm would consent to leave the poet and occupy a separate home. "Any one to propose to me to leave my Eddy," she indignantly exclaimed at the suggestion, "what a cruel insult! No one to console and comfort him but me; no one to nurse him and take care of him when he is sick and helpless! Can I ever forget that dear sweet face, so tranquil, so pale, and those dear eyes looking on me so sadly while she said 'darling, darling Muddie, you will console and take care of my poor Eddie—you will never, never leave him. Promise me, my dear Muddie, and then I can die in peace.' And I did promise her, and when I meet her in heaven I can say, 'I have kept my promise, my darling.'"

Ten days passed and no word had been received from the absent one. "Do you wonder that I am distracted," she wrote to a friend. "I fear everything. . . . Oh, if any evil has befallen him what can comfort me!" Her torturing misgivings were soon to become realities. "I have been so ill," he wrote in his first letter. "The very instant you get this come to me. The joy of seeing you will almost compensate for our sorrows. We can but die together. . . . For your sake, it would be sweet to live, but we must die together. You have been all in all to me, darling, ever beloved mother and dearest, truest friend."

A week later he again wrote: "I never wanted to see any one half so bad as I want to see own darling mother. It seems to me that I would make any sacrifice to hold you by the hand once more, and get you to cheer me up. . . . I do not think that any circumstances will ever tempt me to leave you again. When I am with you I can bear anything, but when I am away from you, I am too miserable to live." Again, apparently on the same day, he wrote: "I love you better than ten thousand lives—so much so that it is cruel in you to let me leave you—nothing but sorrow ever comes of it. Oh, mother, I am so ill while I write, but I resolved that come what would, I could not sleep again without easing your dear heart so far as I could. I got here (Richmond) with $2 over, of which I inclose you one. Oh, God, my mother, shall we ever meet again?"

Five days afterwards, having somewhat recovered his health, which had been temporarily impaired by his recent excesses, he writes more naturally: "Oh, if you only knew now your dear letter comforted me; it acted like magic. Most of my sufferings arose from that terrible idea which I could not get rid of—the idea that you were dead. . . . If possible, dearest mother, I will extricate myself from this difficulty for your dear, dear sake. . . . Keep up heart, my own beloved mother—all may go well. I will put forth all my energies. . . . Oh, give my dearest, fondest love to Mrs. Lewis. Tell her that never while I live will I forget her kindness to my darling mother."

Appeals for Aid.

While this perturbed correspondence had been going on, Poe had been unable to assist Mrs. Clemm by remitting even a small sum, and she was reluctantly compelled to appeal to Griswold for succor. "I have been without the necessaries of life for many days," she wrote, "and would not apply to any one, in hopes that I would soon receive some aid from my poor Eddie. You have no idea how distressing it is to my feelings to make this request, but I think you will feel my situation."

Early in September, Poe, having for the moment shaken off the coil of his dissipation, and being much gratified by the warmth of his reception in the highest social circle of Richmond, began to write more cheerfully of his prospects. He was now winning some success as a lecturer, and was also engaged to Mrs. Shelton, the Elmira Royster of his youth, a widow with an interest for life in a handsome fortune. He was full of his plans for the future, in all which his mother-in-law was expected to play a part not secondary even to his own. "Elmira," he wrote, "talks about visiting Fordham, but I do not know whether that would do. I think perhaps it would be best for you to give up everything there and come on here in the packet. Write immediately and give me your advice about it, for you know best. Could we be happier in Richmond or in Lowell?" On September 18 he again wrote to Mrs. Clemm: "I cannot tell you the joy your two letters gave me to learn at least that you are well and hopeful. May God forever bless you, my dear, dear Muddie. My poor, poor Muddie, I am still unable to send you even one dollar, but keep up heart. I hope that our troubles are nearly over. God bless and protect you, my own darling Muddie."

Unfortunately for Mrs. Clemm her struggles, disappointments and sorrows, which had already been far more numerous and poignant than most women are doomed to endure, were not ended. The crowning anguish of her life was close at hand, all the more intolerable because unexpected. Within less than three weeks after this affectionate and consoling letter was penned, the unhappy poet had breathed his last in Baltimore under circumstances so melancholy as to add to the awful shock caused by the abrupt news of his death. Three letters, written by the bereaved woman in the first flush of her overwhelming grief, have been preserved. "Annie," she wrote to Mrs. Richmond in Lowell, "my Eddie is dead. He died in Baltimore yesterday. Annie, pray for me, your desolate friend. My senses will leave me." Almost at the same hour, she wrote to Neilson Poe: "I cannot believe it. If it is true, God have mercy on me, for he was the last I had to love and cling to." "Never, oh, never," she exclaims in a third letter, "shall I see those dear, lovely eyes. I feel so desolate, so wretched, friendless and alone."

In those first agonized moments of her irretrievable loss, she did not forget that the sacred duty now rested on her to protect his posthumous fame. "I need not to ask you," she wrote to Willis, the very morning the crushing blow fell on her, "to notice his death and to speak well of him. I know you will. But say what an affectionate son he was to me, his poor, desolate mother."

Thought of His Fame.

Not long after the tragic close of the poet's life she met on the street a woman of literary distinction, who had always been friendly to him: "She seized me by both my hands," this lady relates, "regardless of the passersby. 'My Eddie is dead,' she sobbed, hardly able to speak; 'he is gone—gone and left his poor Muddie all alone.' And then she thought of his fame, and she clung to me, speaking with pathetic and prayerful earnestness: 'You will take care of his fame,' said she; 'you will not let them lie about him. Tell the truth of my Eddie. Oh! tell the truth—tell the world how great and good he was. They will defame him. I know they will. They are wicked and cunning, but you will do my poor Eddie justice.' She pressed my hands convulsively. 'Say that you will take my Eddie's part,' said she, almost wildly. 'I can never do him injustice,' said I. 'I assure you, I never will.' 'I know you won't,' said she, seemingly greatly comforted."

Such was the spirit which this staunch, loyal, faithful, long-suffering, noble-hearted woman evinced to the last hour of her life in defending the memory of the illustrious, but most unhappy poet, whose fortunes, by a strange fatality for her, had been so inextricably interwoven with her own.

WAVERLY

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]

Waverly, Va., January 13.—W. E. M. Thornton, of Altavista, spent several days in Waverly and Sussex county this week.

E. G. Sinclair has returned from Cary, N. C., with his bride, formerly Miss Upchurch. They will reside with Mrs. B. E. Cobb, on West Main Street.

Archer Page, of Norfolk, was a guest in the home of Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Gray on Sunday last.

Miss Marion West, after a visit of several days with friends in Waverly, left to-day for her home in Chase City.

Misses Frances and Ellen Broaddus, of Wakefield, visited friends in Waverly this week.

Mr. and Mrs. Schapiro, of Accomac county, arrived in Waverly this week, and will reside on West Main Street.

John W. West returned home from New York City last Sunday afternoon.

Judge J. F. West has returned home from Sussex Courthouse, where he held the January term of Sussex Circuit Court this week.

Thomas H. Howerton left Waverly for Richmond on Tuesday to assume his duties as a member of the Legislature from the counties of Sussex and Greensville.

Etta Wetzler, of Waverly, is visiting friends in Richmond this week.

P. Fleetwood and W. T. Daniel, spent the day in Claremont on Thuraday.

Mrs. W. T. Williams has returned home from a two weeks' visit to friends in Culpeper county.

R. W. Chappell has returned from a three days' visit to friends in Blackstone.

WEST POINT

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]

West Point, Va., January 13.—The West Point School Improvement League held its first meeting of 1912 in the new reception-room in the high school building, and elected officers for the ensuing year as folows: Mrs. J. W. Marshall, president (for the fourth term); Mrs. George W. Richardson, recording secretary; Mrs. J. E. Bland, treasurer; Mrs. Ed. Morvits, first vice-president; Mrs. H. I. Lewis, second vice-president; Mrs. Richmond, Bland, chairman of the membership committee; Mrs. W. R. Broaddus, chairman of the visiting committee; Mrs. Samuel Tunstall Bland, chairman of the entertainment committee; Mrs. Thomas P. Bagby, chairman of the press committee, and Professor King, principal of the High School, chairman of buildings and grounds. Several new members were welcomed to the league. The improvements were then inspected with much pride.

The Thimble Club was entertained this week by Mrs. A. Julian Bagby, Mrs. Freeman, Misses Emily Fuller, of West Point, and Mabel Smoot, of Baltimore, were the guests of honor.

Mr. and Mrs. Philip Hoffman spent a few days recently in Baltimore, returning to their home here Wednesday.

The Whist Club was entertained Thursday afternoon by Mrs. Barrie Fisher.

Mrs. Lucy Byrd Dudley, who teaches the children at the Indian Reservation, about eighteen miles above West Point, gave them a fine treat at Christmas.

The family of J. H. Gary recently held a reunion. One son, Benjamin, and his wife, came from Washington, and another, Harry, and wife, from Norfolk, thus completing the family circle, as the three daughters live in West Point.

There is some sleighing and skating, but the people are pleased at the idea of a glorious ice harvest. All through the country remote from ice plants, the people are working with a good will to fill their icehouses.

BOWLING GREEN

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]

Bowling Green, Va., January 13.—Miss Annie Farish has returned home after a visit of several weeks to relatives in Richmond.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Broaddus, who spent some time in Essex county with relatives, have returned home.

Miss Annie M. White has returned from a visit to relatives in Richmond.

Mrs. Morris P. Mills, who has been visiting her parents, Mr. and Mrs. R. D. Vincent, for several weeks, has returned to her home in Disputanta.

Miss Alice Richards spent a part of this week in Richmond with friends.

Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Green have returned from Hanover, where they spent several days with relatives.

Lev. Hicks left for Washington, where he has secured a position with the government.

ORANGE

[Special to the Times-Dispatch.]

Orange, Va., January 13.—Miss Eva De Jarnette, of Staunton, is the guest of her sister, Mrs. Jack Meeks.

Mr. and Mrs. Rawley Taylor have returned to Woodberry from Baltimore.

John Cole has returned to Woodberry, having spent some time in Norfolk.

Mr. Dillon, of Staunton, has recently been the guest of friends in Orange.

Carroll Johnson, of Washington, has been the guest of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Weister Johnson, this week.

Mrs. E. Victor Williams and small daughter, Miss Katherine Williams, of Richmond, who have been the guests of Mrs. John Williams, have returned to their home.

Miss Mary Vass, of Culpeper, was the guest of Mr. and Mrs. J. Carter Walker, at Woodberry, for the week-end.

H. Green Shackleford left for Richmond on Monday, where he will be in the Senate as clerk for several months.

John Gravett, of Rapidan, was the guest of the Rev. Robert Carter and Mrs. Carter during the past week.

Judge Shackleford is holding court at Louisa Courthouse.

The Aev. R. H. Carter and the Rev. K. M. Block, of Woodberry, attended the meeting of the clericus of the Rapidan, which was held in Warrenton on Monday.

Miss Cassie Sizer has returned from quite a long visit to relatives in Richmond.

WINCHESTER

[Special to the Times-Dispatch.]

Winchester, Va., January 13.—Miss S. Gertrude Marshall, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James W. Marshall, formerly of Clarke county, but now of Summit Point, W. Va., was married at Rocky Glen, the home of her parents, on Wednesday evening to Albert Davis, son of Dr. and Mrs. George A. Davis, also of Summit Point. A large reception was held after the ceremony.

Announcement was made here only a few days ago of the marriage in Hagerstown, Md., on December 23, of Mrs. Katharine Sheehan, daughter of Mrs. S. L. and the late Alexander White, of Wardensville, W. Va., to William Simmers, of Chambersburg, Pa., the ceremony being performed by Rev. W. S. Owens, pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church.

Miss Agnes Smith, who has been visiting relatives in this city for several weeks, has returned to Staunton.

Mrs. Charles E. Supinger, and her mother-in-law, Mrs. Supinger, have returned to Front Royal, after visiting at the home of the former's parents, Mr. and Mrs. John L. Herrell, in this city.

Misses Jessie and Bernice Swhier, of Indiana, who have been visiting Miss Irene Capper, in Winchester, have been the honor guests at many handsome entertainments during the past two weeks.

Miss Meade has gone to Washington, after visiting her brother and sister-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Nat. Meade, near town.

Miss Bessie McNear, of Huntington, W. Va., who has been visiting her aunt, Miss Bessie Gaver, at Middletown, has returned to Sweet Briar College.

Mrs. Abney Payne has returned to Fort McHenry, Md., after visiting at the home of her parents, Dr. and Mrs William P. McGuire, in Winchester.

Miss Mary Rhodes, of Middletown, has returned from a visit to her sister, Mrs. Walter Linaweaver, at Harrisonburg.

Miss Helen E. Zirkle, who has been spending two weeks with relatves in Philadelphia, has returned to her home in Winchester.

Mrs. James B. Lovett has been visiting friends in Harrisonburg this week.

Mrs. John B. Hoffman, of Wilmington, Del., returned to her home on Wednesday, accompanied by her mother, Mrs. Virginia Nulton, of this city.

Mr. and Mrs. Luther Jones, who have been visiting the latter's mother, Mrs. Henry Schneider, Sr., in this city, returned to Washington a few days ago.

Miss Elizabeth Hudgins has returned to Hampton, after spending the holiday season at the home of her grandparents, Dr. and Mrs. William S. Love, in Winchester.

HEATHSVILLE

[Special to the Times-Dispatch.]

Heathsville, Va., January 13.—Miss Nellie Cawood, of St. Mary's county Md., is visiting at the home of Cashier Charles E. Sterling.

Virgil Carson, son of Rev. E. C. Carson, left on Thursday to resume his studies at the University College of Medicine in Richmond.

Henry C. Rowe spent several days in Washington recently.

Miss Harriet Blackwell, of Hagerstown, Md., has returned to her school duties here.

Misses Genevieve and Margaret Smith entertained at cards a number of the young people a few nights ago.

Rev. E. C. Carson is on a visit to relatives in Amherst county.

C. Beverly Brown, of Charleston, W. Va., spent several days the past week at his home near here.

Mrs. Harry Land, of Suffolk, is visiting her mother, Mrs. Horace Ball, in lower Northumberland.

R. L. Beale, of Bowling Green, formerly of this place, has been visiting relatives near here the past week.

HIGHLAND PARK

[Special to the Times-Dispatch.]

Highland Springs, Va., January 13.—Among the interesting events of the past week was the reception given in honor of the fortieth wedding anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. Oren Woodward, at their attractive home in Highland Springs. Mrs. Dewitt Hubbard directed the entertainment program. Frederick Barbour made the address of welcome. Miss Izora DeWolf rendered an original poem, "When We Moved In"; Mr. Lathrop gave a humorous selection, "The Widow and the Bachelor," which was followed by a character sketch, by James Whitcomb Riley, "Our Hired Girl," Miss DeWolf then read from the Caudle monologues, "Mr. Caudle Becomes a Mason." The Rev. Joseph Seaton concluded the program. Among those present were Miss DeWolf, Mrs. McDowell, Miss Broad, Mr. and Mrs. E. S. Read, Mr. and Mrs. P. S. Read, Mr. and Mrs. F. P. Read, the Rev. Mr. Seaton, Mr. and Mrs. Moore, Mrs. Weeks, Mr. and Mrs. Dudley, Mrs. Storer, Mr. and Mrs. D. A. Smith, Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Hubbard and son, Mr. and Mrs. Barbour, Miss Kathryn Barbour, Mr. and Mrs. Rathburn, Mrs. Callahan, Mr. Lathrop, Mr. and Mrs. Lytle, Dr. and Mrs. Schoenbaum, Dr. and Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Monroe, Mr. and Mrs. Gatewood, Mrs. Anringer, Mr. and Mrs. Lovejoy, Mr. and Mrs. Gray, Miss Vinal, Mr. and Mrs. C. G. Woodward and son, Oren, Jr.

Mr. Vernon Mayer, of Cedar Avenue, moved his family to Richmond Thursday.

Mr. and Mrs. Lovejoy, of Boston, are spending the winter with Mr. and Mrs. P. S. Read, at "Reddydale," in Highland Springs.

FREELING

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]

Freeling, Va., January 13.—Octavus McFall, of Bolecamp, is visiting his parents, Mr. and Mrs. William McFall, of this place.

Robert Reed has moved to Jenkins, Ky.

William D. Howell, of Isom, is in town.

Wiley B. Trivitt is at Coeburn.

Miss Cora Beverly is at Jenkins, Ky.

Misses Della and Ida Beverly, of Georges Fork, are visiting relatives in town.

Mrs. J. G. McFall, of Osborns Gap, is at Freeling.

GUINEA

[Special to the Times-Dispatch.]

Guinea, Va., January 13.—Mrs. Hope Hendrixson, of Wilmington, Del., is on a visit to her sister, Mrs. Page Bullock.

Mr. and Mrs. G. M. Adams entertained a number of guests Thursday evening in honor of their niece, Miss Helen Adams, of Richmond.

Miss Pearl Hurst, of Mathews county, and Miss Julia Washington, of King and Queen county, have resumed their duties as teachers in the graded school.

Miss Bessie Wigglesworth, of Blantons, is visiting Mrs. B. R. Dabney.

Mrs. I. L. Eubank gave a reception Friday evening in honor of her sister, Mrs. Harry McWhirt. Among those present were Misses Lucy Dabney, Helen Green, Bessie Meese, Blanche Eubank, Ethel Nunn and Carlyle Dabney, Earl Garrison, Forrest Garrison, Tom Jones, Quimby Tompkins, Emmet Blanton, Arthur Blanton, Gilbert Moss, H. McWhirt and Edwin Lent.

Fred Walker visited at Guinea this week.

BURKEVILLE

[Special to the Times-Dispatch.]

Burkeville, Va., January 13.—Sydney D. Frissell spent the week-end in town.

William P. Bostick is visiting his father in Randleman, N. C.

Mrs. E. C. Scott and Mrs. John Mann, of Petersburg, spent Tuesday with Mrs. George Scott.

The Thursday Book Club will hold its first meeting after Christmas with Mrs. J. P. Agnew.

Miss Helen Leath was in Richmond Monday and Tuesday visiting Miss Martha Blair.

Dr. P. W. Beckham, of Farmville was in town Sunday.